

Message Text

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60

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 IO-10

SAM-01 SAB-01 AF-06 EB-07 NEAE-00 /094 W

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O R 042215Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6227

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 8718

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG IS US SU XF

SUBJECT: SADAT'S SPEECH ON DISENGAGEMENT: COMMENT

REF: CAIRO 8717

1. JUST CONCLUDED SADAT SPEECH, IN BOTH SUBSTANCE AND DELIVERY, WAS VIGOROUS DEFENSE OF NEW DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT. PREPARED TEXT WAS SUPPLEMENTED WITH EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS. PREPARATIONS FOR SPEECH BEGAN TWO EVENINGS AGO, BUT AREA DEVELOPMENTS IN INTERVENING PERIOD NECESSITATED TEXTUAL REVISIONS UP TO LAST MINUTE. ALTHOUGH SPEECH HAD INITIALLY BEEN INTENDED TO BE EXPLANATORY, SYRIAN, PALESTINIAN, IRAQI AND SOVIET DENUNCIATIONS OF AGREEMENT IN COURSE OF THE DAY DICTATED SHIFT TO JUSTIFICATORY FOCUS. LAST EVENING SADAT WAS MAINLY WORRIED ABOUT HOW TO EXPLAIN TWO ASPECTS: RENUNCIATION OF BLOCKADE
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AND DURATION ISSUE. BY THIS EVENING, THESE TWO ELEMENTS WERE TOTALLY

SUBMERGED IN OVERRIDING NEED TO DEFEND EGYPT'S ACTION. SADAT WAS IN GRAVE AND EMOTIONAL MOOD REFLECTING HIS SENSITIVITY TO CONCENTRATED ARAB ATTACK NOW GETTING UNDERWAY. HE WAS AWARE THAT HE IS ENGAGED IN ONE OF THE CRUCIAL POLITICAL BATTLES OF HIS CAREER TO PROTECT HIS AND EGYPT'S STATUS IN THE ARAB WORLD. HIS CRITICS AT HOME WILL CONTEND HE IS ONLY NOW, BELATEDLY, REALIZING WHAT HE HAS BITTEN OFF. IF SO, SADAT AVOIDED APOLOGETICS AND DID NOT FLINCH FROM DEFIANTLY ARGUING THE CORRECTNESS OF EGYPT'S (READ HIS) DECISION.

2. MOST DISAPPOINTING ELEMENT TO HIM IN CURRENT CONTROVERSY IS SYRIAN ATTITUDE. ALTHOUGH ASAD HAD SNUBBED VP MOBAREK YESTERDAY, LATTER HAD COME BACK WITH REPORTS THAT SYRIAN MILITARY OFFICERS AND BUSINESSMEN WERE PLEASED WITH AGREEMENT AND HOPED SIMILAR ONE MIGHT DEVELOP FOR SYRIA. THUS, WHILE SADAT HAD EXPECTED SOME SYRIAN GROUSING, HE HAD COUNTED ON ASAD'S SUBMERGING HIS OBJECTIONS AND AVOIDING AN OPEN CONFRONTATION. THIS JUDGEMENT HAS BEEN PROVEN WRONG, A DEVELOPMENT SADAT PUBLICLY ATTRIBUTED TO MALICIOUS SOVIET INSTIGATION, BUT WHICH HE ALSO RECOGNIZES REFLECTS CHRONIC SYRIAN DISTRUST OF EGYPT'S INTENTIONS.

3. SADAT HAD LITTEL TO SAY ABOUT SPECIFIC GAINS ACHIEVED THROUGH AGREEMENT. HE CITED RETURN OF OIL FIELDS AND SECURITY FOR CANAL ZONE, BUT WAS OTHERWISE VAGUE ON DETAILS. THESE, HE HOPED, MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO DIVULGE IN DUE COURSE. HE ACKNOWLEDGED AGREEMENT IS NOT ALL EGYPT WOULD HAVE LIKED, NEITHER FOR ITSELF NOR FOR ARAB BROTHERS, BUT ARGUED IT MAINTAINS MOMENTUM OF THE PEACE PROCESS FROM WHICH ALL WILL ULTIMATELY BENEFIT.

4. SOVIETS, SYRIANS, PALESTINIANS AND IRAQIS WERE GIVEN VERBAL DRUBBINGS. SOVIETS, WHO HAVE BEEN SADAT'S WHIPPING BOYS FOR SOME TIME, WERE EXCORIATED AS "SATANS" AND THEIR PERFIDY ROUNDLY CASTIGATED. SEVERITY OF SADAT'S CRITICISM WILL FURTHER STRAIN EGYPTIAN-SOVIET RELATIONS. IN ATYPICALLY SHARP FASHION, SADAT ALSO SINGLED OUT SYRIAN BROTHERS FOR ALLOWING THEMSELVES TO BE MISLED BY SOVIETS AND FOR CONTINUING TO MISREPRESENT SADAT'S PURPOSES AND ACTIONS, DESPITE EGYPT'S PROVEN DEVOTION TO ARAB CAUSE. IRAQI BA'ATH PARTY WAS CENSURED FOR DO-NOTHINGNESS, BUT CURTLY DISMISSED AS OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE. PALESTINIANS, AND ESPECIALLY YASIR ARAFAT, WERE SCORED FOR FAILING TO APPRECIATE GOE'S CONSTANT EFFORTS DURING PAST 25 YEARS IN THEIR BEHALF.

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5. SADAT FORCIBLY DENIED AGREEMENT TAKES EGYPT OUR OF ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT. ALL OR MOST OF SINAI COULD HAVE BEEN RECOVERED, HE CONTENDED, FOR PEACE OR NON-BELLIGERENCY, BUT HE HAD REFUSED TO DO SO.

6. WHILE STRESSING HIS INDEPENDENCE OF ANY GREAT POWER, SADAT PRAISED

PRESIDENT FORD, EX-PRESIDENT NIXON AND SECRETARY KISSINGER FOR THEIR EFFORTS ACHIEVE AGREEMENT. CLEARLY SENSITIVE TO CHARGES THAT EARLY WARNING STATIONS IN SINAI CONSTITUTE AMERICAN BASES, HE DENIED THIS IS SO. INSTEAD, HE ANNOUNCED, EGYPT WILL OBTAIN FROM USG EXPENSIVE, SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT OF THE TYPE WHICH SOVIETS HAD REFUSED TO SELL.

7. QUESTION ARISES HOW EFFECTIVE WAS SADAT'S SPEECH. EGYPTIANS REACTION TO AGREEMENT MAY BE EXPECTED TO BE GENERALLY POSITIVE, ALTHOUGH SOME DOUBTS MAY BE EXPECTED TO ARISE WHEN AND IF ALL DETAILS BECOME KNOWN. ISRAELI LEAKS ARE SINGULARLY UNHELPFUL IN THIS REGARD. IT IS DOUBTFUL, HOWEVER, THAT SYRIANS, PALESTINIANS OR IRAQIS ARE PERSUADED, AND SADAT MUST EXPECT TO BE UNDER CONTINUING ATTACK FROM THOSE QUARTERS. HOWEVER POWERFUL HIS SPEECH MAY HAVE BEEN, HE DID NOT PROVIDE HIS WELL-WISHES WITH MUCH AMMUNITION TO DEFEND THE AGREEMENT. BASICALLY, HE MERELY ASKED FOR CONTINUING ARAB FAITH AND TRUST IN EGYPT'S INTENTIONS IN BEHALF OF ARAB CAUSE. ARAB BROTHERHOOD IS MANY THINGS, BUT MUTUAL FAITH AND TRUST ARE CONSPICUOUSLY LACKING. HOWEVER, SADAT PLACED ARABS ON NOTICE THAT EGYPT WILL NOT ALLOW TRADITIONAL ARAB NEGATIVISM AND IRRATIONALITY TO DETER IT FROM PURSUING PRAGMATIC, REALISTIC POLICY. EILTS

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